

Unnumbered

Stella Richards

This is an interview of Stella Richards by Elizabeth F. Sowards, Uintah County Historian, in Naples, Utah. This interview was done 7 April 1983.

Elizabeth Sowards (ES): I was listening to a history of Billie and Ernest Untermann. I understand that you taught Billie from the first grade to the fourth?

Stella: Well, now, I don't remember that I had the first grade. I taught down there three or four years. The last two or three years that I taught down there they had a first grade teacher, and I had third and fourth. They had first and second and I had third and fourth. I know that I had Billie in the third and fourth. She had a boy named Brown living up at their place and she and this boy rode from Brush Creek down to school. She lived above what is now Steinaker Dam. She and that boy came down every day on horseback.

ES: They rode to school on a horse?

Stella: They rode to school on a horse.

ES: Where did they go to school?

Stella: They came to mine down in Ashley, it was Union Ward.

ES: Union Ward, that's where you taught?

Stella: That was Union Ward and they came to Union Ward.

ES: Tell me where you went to school, then tell me where you taught, the years and places.

Stella: Well, I went to the school in Naples, to the first, second and third. The fourth [grade] I went to Salt Lake, and the fifth, seventh and eighth. I took sixth grade in Naples.

Then I went to the LDS College. It is where the Hotel Utah is now [northeast corner of Main and South Temple in Salt Lake City]. They had three or four large buildings. Gordon Hinckley's father was my teacher. One of my favorites.

ES: Do you remember his first name?

Stella: Yes, but I can't right now.

ES: I can look it up. It was Gordon's father. [Bryant Stringham Hinckley]

Stella: I have his book at home, his writings.

ES: Why were you sometimes in Naples and sometimes in Salt Lake City? Did your father have work in Salt Lake?

Stella: I had an aunt there, all of Mother's brothers and sisters. Mother's father and mother had twelve children and every one of their family had twelve children, that is, ten of them. The two that didn't have twelve, one had one girl and the other didn't have any. The one who didn't have any raised twenty-one, just took them in and she adopted three or four. The other one only had one. Well, Uncle Jim came out to take up land on the reservation for his sheep and when he went back, he took me back with him and I was in the fourth grade.

ES: What was their last name? It would be different than Richards.

Stella: It was Marsden, James Marsden.

ES: So, when you were young, where did you go to school in Salt Lake?

Stella: Taylorsville.

ES: Was that called the Taylorsville Elementary?

Stella: Yes. My grandfather was the first pioneer that crossed the Jordan River. They lived in a dugout in Taylorsville. He came over in an "ace" company after Brigham Young. Brigham Young came first, then Grandfather was in an "ace" company and my Uncle Will was born in Echo Canyon. He was the first white child born in Utah. Not the first one in Salt Lake, but the first one in Utah.

ES: Was that Utah County?

Stella: He was the first one born in Utah. As the pioneers were coming in, see, he was born in Echo Canyon, before they got to Salt Lake. They had to stay up in the canyon for three or four days until Grandmother could come down into the valley.

ES: What did she name the baby?

Stella: William Harker.

ES: So, your grandfather was?

Stella: Joseph Harker. He was a bishop and became the patriarch. He was in the same company with Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor. That's the reason it is called Taylorsville, see. In Grandfather's diary, he tells how he went with John Taylor, who became the next president after Brigham Young. It tells how they went hunting buffalo for the whole company. They were out of meat, and he and Mr. Horn, and Grandfather went hunting and got nine buffalo. They cut it up and distributed it.

ES: You said that your uncle took you back when you were in the fourth grade. How did you travel out there?

Stella: Well, he had a large team and a wagon, one of those prairie schooners. When we went across Red Creek, there had been a flood, and the water came up so high. If he hadn't've had a big team, we would have gone down. The water came up. You know, they used to have a "jockey box" at the front of the wagon. They had a lot of candy in there for me, and my candy was all wet, so, you know that the water came up above the first bed.

ES: How was it when you went down Daniel's Canyon? Someone once said that in fifteen miles you crossed the creek seventy-two times. Do you remember crossing through the little stream going down Daniel's Canyon a lot?

Stella: That was in 1905. Now, when we first came to Vernal from Salt Lake, I don't know how many times. Johnny Karren, I thought he said seventy or eighty times.

ES: Seventy-two is what they have said, in fifteen miles up that canyon.

Stella: Well, there are thirteen now. As you go along, you can count them. Here it is on this side, and here it is on the other.

ES: For a long time here, I guess the roads were just gravel on the way to Salt Lake. The roads, like Highway 40, were not paved for a long time.

Stella: No, the first time we went to Yellowstone there were just dirt roads, and that was, I believe, in 1927.

ES: When you went to Yellowstone were there a lot of bears there?

Stella: Well, we sure had some bear stories. We saw a few. But the bear stories that were told to us! We went in one side and came out through Wyoming and down the other side. About five o'clock at night we stopped at a camp, one of the ranger's camps. He told us stories until 2 o'clock of thing that had happened. He said, "It's always the people's fault. We tell them and we warn them, but some of them think that they know more. They get brave and do things."

He said one time they hung up their meat. They put up two poles and then a pole across and made a place to hang the meat down. He said that before they did that the bears would get it and that was the reason that they did it. He said they could still smell the meat, so they made a long string of tin cans on a wire and then a big noose and they put a big piece of meat [in it]. When the bear came along, he went through the wire noose, and, of course, the wire went around his neck. He told us how that old grizzly bear sat and pounded and tried to get out of that wire.

ES: Would it make noise from the tins cans then?

Stella: Yes. He showed us a baseball bat. He said, "Whenever a bear comes to the camp, we just pick it up and hit him on the nose and that ends it."

ES: They didn't like that. After you finished at LDS College, you came back to Vernal and taught

school then?

Stella: Well, I went to the university first. The LDS College was a high school. They called it the LDS College, but it was a high school.

ES: Where did you go to the university?

Stella: I went to the University of Utah.

ES: How long did you go there?

Stella: Two and one-half years. Then I took extension work in the summer. I graduated as a teacher, but I had special certificates to teach domestic art and domestic science in high school. But I didn't do it; I liked the kids.

ES: So, then where was your first experience when you began teaching? Where was your first year teaching? Was it Union?

Stella: Union. I got fifty dollars a month. They paid twice a year. No, I guess I got mine every month. But when my father started teaching down there when we first came to the valley (we moved to Ashley), he got fifty dollars a month, but he was only paid twice a year, once at Christmas time and when school was out. The money came from Salt Lake, but all those months...

ES: You had to survive somehow, huh? You had a big family then, twelve?

Stella: Yes. I don't know whether you remember Eddie Young.

ES: Yes.

Stella: Well, his father and his father's brother were the two that brought our family in.

ES: Oh, yes. Now, Eddie was married to Effie? Wasn't his wife's name Effie?

Stella: That was his second wife. I knew his first wife better.

ES: Did she die?

Stella: Yes, she died.

ES: When you first started school, yourself, when you went down to Naples, was it in the old Naples School that they tore down?

Stella: Yes. I went to Kate Calder. I don't know whether you remember Kate or not. Her husband's name was Orson Calder. He was a brother to Wallace and all the other Calders that

used to be here.

ES: When you were going to school yourself, I guess they had blackboards and paper and pencils, you didn't use the slate?

Stella: When we went to school they had a chart, about so wide and so high. The first day we went in and here sat a cat. "I see a cat." Well, during the day we learned "I see a cat." She would point, and everybody would say, "cat," "see." We had to learn to spell it. We had to learn to count to five. "One, two, three, four, five." So, when we went home, why, we displayed our new knowledge: "I" and "see" and "cat," and counted to five.

ES: So, she would teach you something a little more every day, then.

Stella: Yes, every day she would turn through that chart. "I see a dog." Of course, by the time you got through, why, you knew a lot of words. I could read in the second, third, and fourth grade better than some of the high school kids can now.

ES: You know, that amazes me when I read some of the writing in these old pioneer stories, the beautiful writing that they did in those days. They could express themselves so much better than we can.

In a big family, did you have family prayer in the mornings together or just at meals? What was a regular day at your house? What did you do?

Stella: Let me tell you about the house first. At first, when we first came here, there wasn't a house that we could get for a month or two. Finally, a man named Thornton [or Westover] joined the bad gang. You know, Warner, all those. Cassidy and all those. Well, he joined them and left his house. So we got his house.

ES: You got the crook's house!

Stella: But, after a year or two Father thought that Ashley was a little bit too rough, so we moved over to Naples. The Caldwells, Gerald and Margaret, well, it was their grandfather. He had 160 acres and we bought a five-acre piece at the corner. I don't know whether you know where we live now.

ES: Yes, I know where you live.

Stella: We bought that from him. Father kept a diary and he put down who cut the logs and who brought them down, who laid them up, the price of the windows, and the door, and all this, that and the other, and at the end he says, "Complete, \$95.85." Imagine a house these days costing \$95.

ES: How many rooms did you have then?

Stella: One.

ES: One big room?

Stella: The first year or two we had no place to put the wheat and the oats and things. You see, we bought a five-acre plot. We had potatoes and we had melons, and we had squash and carrots and things. So over in one corner, we cut it off and made a little wheat bin. Over in this other corner, the northwest corner, they made a little oat bin. We kids slept on the oat bin. All the vegetables and fruits and things that we had were on the wheat bin. Father and Mother's bed was between the two.

I often wonder how we got in. There was a cook stove and a table, a cupboard, and we had an old piano box. I don't know whether you remember the old-fashioned piano boxes. It was in the shape of a piano and they would lift up the lid. Well, we got one of those and put a couple shelves in it. We put the bacon and the butter and things on these shelves. It had two hundred pounds of flour in the bottom.

ES: It seems to me, as I remember, they wouldn't have had a "safe" at that time, but that would be the same as in Virginia. My grandmother has a thing with shelves in it, and it has little patterns cut out in the doors so it could breathe. The patterns were like flowers or some design on the doors. They didn't have the refrigeration like we have, so they would set some of the leftovers in that cupboard on the shelves. We would eat it. I guess we all survived, it wasn't refrigerated.

Stella: I guess our pigs got most of what was left after the four or five kids were through.

ES: You know, that's one thing about a big family: you didn't have much left over for very long, did you?

We were talking the other day about clothing. A lot of the mothers used to sew the clothes for the family. They would make the patterns. They would look at a catalog and cut the patterns out of newspaper. Could you buy patterns in those days? How did they make clothes?

Stella: Well, we had a family named Miller. George Miller lived just north of us about a quarter of a mile, and Mrs. Miller always made our nice sunbonnets and our Sunday clothes. Of course, the rest, we got dressed, but...

ES: You know, people didn't have a lot of clothes. It seems like my mother always said that they had one Sunday outfit and then you would have maybe two changes for the week, you know, just a couple. They didn't have a lot of clothes like children do nowadays.

Do you remember some of the parades or some of the events that happened in Vernal? Would everyone come in for the parades?

Stella: I used to help do it. I have a picture now of one that we had. It was a big wagon with a big team. There were three or four small evergreen trees, and a coyote stuffed, and an eagle stuffed, and, you know, we used to have people that did those things. We would borrow them and put them in the parade.

I remember once that the Hackings were relatives of [LDS Church] President Grant. I

read in the newspaper that he was coming. I someway contacted Mrs. Clare Hacking to see if he would be busy from 10 am on the Fourth of July, or the 24th from 10 'til noon, and she said no. So, I wrote to him and asked him if would come down and be the speaker at our ward at that time, and, boy, we made a big platform and had it all decorated up with bunting—red, white and blue—and flags, and he came and gave a wonderful talk.

When he got ready to go, I went over to him and said, “We have got some refreshments. I would like you to come over and have some.” He said that he was going back to the Hackings. I said, “Could we give you a drink?” And he said, “Well, now, let me see. If you have any root beer, I’ll have a glass.”

What’s the other kind that they don’t drink?

ES: A sarsparilla or something like that?

Stella: It’s the kind they have all the time now.

ES: Like Coke? Let’ see, there’s root beer, that’s what he wanted.

Stella: He wanted root beer. He didn’t want the other. You know we had everything that they have, but it had this, what kind of water do they call it? Carbonated. He didn’t want it. He didn’t want carbonated water. The root beer did not have the carbonated water.

ES: Getting back to teaching, you taught at Union and then where did you go? To Naples?

Stella: I taught in Union, well, all of the schools in the valley except Central. I said no every time: “I’m just a country kid now and I teach country kids.”

ES: So, you taught in Maeser also, then?

Stella: And Jensen and Davis.

ES: Out in Davis Ward. By their chapel out there?

Stella: Well, it was where the new chapel is now. That was the old schoolhouse.

ES: Did it burn down?

Stella: No, they tore it down when they moved Davis children over to Naples School. You see, they go to Naples now. When they closed the Davis School, they just tore it down and built the Davis [LDS] chapel.

ES: I bet people are excited that they are building another one over there now, the new one.

Stella: They should be.

ES: I look to see the time that they build one back in Jensen.

Stella: I hope they do. You know, I sure bawled when I went to Jensen. I had taught at Maeser for thirteen years and I didn't want to quit. Then Dr. Vest came and three times asked me and I said no three times. The next time he came up and said, "Stella, let me take you down to Jensen. I want to tell you a thing. I have prayed about it and I have prayed about it, and every time you are the one who comes, up and I believe you can handle it."

So, I went to Jensen and I always taught religion, always. I started school with Bible stories. Of course, Bible stories... It isn't Catholic, Presbyterian, it isn't all that. Take a Bible story and tell a Bible story.

When I went down, there had been a salesman with four volumes: *Men of Might*, *Men of Faith*, *Men of ...* I don't know, but there were four volumes. I went down and I said, "Did any of your families buy these four volumes?" Half a dozen. A. DeMar Dudley had them. I said, "Would you ask your daddy if we could take *Men of Faith*?" He brought it and I read it to them.

ES: Was A. DeMar one of your pupils?

Stella: I had his kids. I taught a number of them. This last one is teaching up in Maeser now, Lois. He invited us to dinner. They invited us a half dozen times and they always treated us very nice.

ES: I guess you remember the days when Vernal's Main Street was not paved.

Stella: I remember driving from our home up to the old Johnson Mill. It's on the corner of where you cross to go... Well, it's a mile west as you go to Maeser. There was an old mill on that corner. Took me from early morning until almost dark to get up there and back. Of course, I had to have two hundred pounds of flour made, too.

ES: Now, they said that the mills were sort of a center for people to put up notices, if they needed help or wanted to sell things. They said it was sort of the center of activity at one time. Do you remember? Would people visit and exchange the news, as to who had had a baby, who was getting married, etc? Was that the case when you used to go to the mill?

Stella: I don't remember that. I was just a kid.

ES: So, when you went to town as a child, then you would go in a horse and buggy, or just on a horse?

Stella: Sometimes just take a pillow slip and put the stuff in it and tie it to the saddle. But most of the time I went in the buggy. We had first a single buggy and one horse, and we had those "white tops," as they called them.

ES: Tell me, who are your brothers and sisters?

Stella: I think you know Lloyd and Bertha.

ES: Yes.

Stella: Then, Wanda, Wanda Richards. They have sixty-two in their family now. You see, Ben married Gertrude Ackhurst and they had four. Then he married Wanda, and she had three that they had adopted, and they had four of their own, so that made them eleven. Now, the eleven all have families. They go to the mountain every year and have a wonderful time.

Then Donnette and Lyman lived in Tooele. They run Mountain Fuel.

ES: Now, is Donnette your sister?

Stella: Donnette is a sister.

ES: And what is Lyman's last name?

Stella: Anderson. They have been retired about fifteen years and they worked in the Salt Lake Temple, from four until twelve o'clock.

Then a niece that Hannah raised, Hannah is a sister that is home now. She is practically an invalid since she quit teaching. She raised two children, Betty and Pat Meyers. Betty has worked in the temple for about fifteen or sixteen years. She works in the clothing department.

The other one that Hannah raised, the sister, married a Richards. Now, he was no relation to us, but he was one of the Richardses, and he has been on two national education assignments. They were to Hawaii and all the states, everywhere in the United States. Usually in the summertime he takes them one or two places that he goes. They were out about a month ago. When I went to Sunday school, I said, "You be here when I get home at one o'clock." And he said, "No, I have to be in Los Angeles tomorrow, so I will have to go early so I can fly down there." The state supervisor took her own sister down to this, to his wife, that's our niece, to train, so she must be a pretty good teacher.

ES: Must be. Now, tell me, I talked to Erma Taylor a while back and she was telling me about some of her Christmases when she was a young girl, and about her family and how they celebrated Christmas. Do you remember some special Christmases or how you celebrated some of your Christmases? She said they didn't have a tree. They just hung up stockings. Did you have trees or did you have stockings?

Stella: Well, I'll say stockings, but later we got so we would put a name on the table. This pile would belong to one child, candy and nuts and things were here. Each one had their own place.

ES: I guess you had so many that you had to do that. You couldn't just put it under the tree.

Stella: Well, we didn't have a tree.

ES: Oh, that's right. So, they just put it around on the table.

Stella: Each one would choose a place where they wanted their pile put.

ES: My mother told me that when they were young, they used to, in some way, put small candles on the tree. I think they only lit them the night of Christmas or while the tree was green. Then they would have homemade decorations. They would get oranges and candy, maybe a doll.

Stella: It didn't take much space to put the presents, I'm telling you. Because it was just mainly candy and nuts and an orange. I remember a little shoe about this long with a velvet hidden cushion on it. It was a pretty thing. Each one of us got one nice thing and that was it. Later, we got a doll apiece.

Over in Ashley Ward they used to have Christmases in the schoolhouse. We would drive from Naples over. Father still taught down there and you would see them coming with their baskets and their dishpans and things. They would bring them in and put them on the table or on the benches. It was a dinner and then they would put the benches together and put boards, long slabs and tablecloths over it, and everybody would bring their stuff and put it on the table.

ES: I guess they would have little plays or pageants, maybe like the Wise Men or something?

Stella: Well, they always had a program. He always had a program. There were little skits, different ones, I don't remember what they were, but, you know, short skits. Then they would have songs and recitations and things like that.

Unidentified person: May I ask you a question? Was Lorraine Day raised here?

Stella: Lorraine Day's grandfather was the one who took care of the mail up here when I went up and got the mail.

Person: Ada Rich Johnson was her mother.

ES: I think her mother moved to Roosevelt, but her grandparents lived here, didn't they?

Stella: Yes.

Person: It lists her grandmother as playing in the early plays at the Opera House and also her mother. I didn't realize that she was from around here. She would be about my mother's age group. It is fascinating what you find out.

Stella: I used to work for her.

Person: (Speaking of the Daughter of the Utah Pioneers book). This is really terrific! Yes, I have found a lot of things.

ES: I haven't had a chance to read all the way through that, but I thought you would find something.

Person: They used to give farm products in order to get in to see the productions, the local home productions, they would give products. They couldn't afford to pay for the tickets, so they would

just pay with farm products.

ES: They said, too, that the *Vernal Express*, people used to pay for their subscriptions with their wool. The sheep people would bring in so much wool, and they had a wool room, or a corner, where they would put wool and then sell it to the bank.

Stella: When we had dance, they would bring anything. You could bring fence posts, or chickens, or eggs, or butter, or whatever they had, they would bring to pay.

They would have the light, lamps up here, you know, with those reflectors, five or six along the sides of the wall.

ES: Now, was that at the Orpheus, the Imperial Hall?

Stella: That was at Roberts Hall. That was in Naples. It was right across, exactly across, from the meeting house now. It used to be there.

Person: They say in here that that's where they saw their first movie pictures—that's what some people say—was at Roberts Hall in Naples.

Stella: We were the stake center for a while, too. Our schoolhouse was on the corner. You know where Verna Karren's rest home used to be? Well, that corner right in there used to be the old schoolhouse that was the stake center.

Oh, they used to have fun at those old dances! The square dances. One lady's petticoat came off. Her boyfriend kicked it under the benches. You know, you remember funny things like that.

ES: You know these hoop skirts? A few years ago they came back and this couple, this girl, had one on at their wedding up in Maeser, and they were dancing, and it fell off. They did about the same thing. There was no way that she could stand there and pull it back up, so they just kind of pushed it under the gift table, and that's all they could do. I guess when those fall off, you can't just pull them back up.

Stella: Another thing to tell you about Billie Untermann. I was with her from 2 o'clock until 5 on the day she died, alone. I don't know, she was just as sweet. When I heard that she had died that night, I couldn't believe it!

ES: What did she die of? I can't remember.

Stella: Well, he picked her up and her lungs filled with water. He picked her up to carry her and take her to Salt Lake.

ES: What did she have?

Stella: Cancer, cancer of the lungs.

ES: So when he picked her up, she couldn't breathe.

Stella: Of course, he wouldn't know. He picked her up and was going to put her in the car. One day, I don't know how it come, but I happened to be up at the cemetery. I don't remember who I was with, but Mr. Untermann came up. Now, we had talked to him and Billie about the [LDS] church a number of times. You know, they didn't believe as we did. As we were sitting there down by our people's graves, Mr. Untermann came and sat by Billie's grave. He brought some flowers and put by Billie's grave and he sat there for the longest time and cried.

One day I sent him some stories and I still have the letter that he wrote. He said, "I respect people and get help from them, but we know that this is all there is to life, that there is nothing after." I kept it. It was such a nice letter. He said, "We respect your belief and everything and we are glad that you get comfort from it, but..."

ES: Billie, what was her maiden name?

Stella: Billie Ruple.

ES: She was a Ruple? She lived out, like you say, up above Steinaker in the canyon there.

Stella: I believe it's Brush Creek.

ES: Brush Creek. Up where the phosphate plant is.

Stella: They froze their fingers, or toes, or something, and finally they didn't come [to school] for a month or two. This Brown that lived with them, he had missed language and everything. It was at the time when we had a language book that had stories and things in it. I had told the story, and in this review, I asked who could tell the story. Well, this Brown kid hadn't been there, but he said, "You know, I read that in the fall and I believe I can tell it." And do you know, that kid said that and I opened the book when he started, and he repeated that word for word, like he must have had a photographic mind. Because he said it word for word as it was written in Grieg's Language Book.

ES: That's unusual, isn't it?

Stella: But, Billie was a sweet kid.

ES: I was reading about Ernest yesterday, and it said that his parents had been in Germany and they didn't mean to stay there, but he was born in Germany. So, when the war broke out, they had started working over here and they wouldn't pay them for a while until they checked the fact that he was born in Germany. We were fighting against the Germans, so they came and investigated him, you know, to be sure that he wasn't sympathetic to the German people, and then he was paid after a few weeks. I thought that was interesting. It was just sort of the matter. They didn't mean to be there when he was born. I think he came early or something, or they delayed in coming back to the States, so he was born in Germany.

Let me show you some of these old parade pictures. Maybe you would remember some

of them. Now, this one says July the 4th. Did you have your parades in Naples, or did you come into Vernal for something like that? That's July the 4th, in 1912. You may have been in Salt Lake then.

Stella: Sometimes we came to Vernal and sometimes we were out to Naples. Of course, it was more after I started to teach that I was in things.

ES: Do you remember any Indians? Did the Indians ever come around when you were very young? What relationship did your family have with the Indian people?

Stella: Mostly, when the three tribes went down from Point Lookout up at the head of the valley.

ES: Where the turnoff is?

Stella: Well, we always knew when the Indians were coming. The three tribes moved every fall from the reservation down to the end of the road, of, around Grand Junction or wherever it's not so cold. So many of them, you know, horses and dogs, and I guess there were four or five hundred Indians with their horses.

ES: Did they have any wagons?

Stella: A few, but not many. Most of them rode horseback. They would have one or two with a few things in between, but most of them rode horseback.

ES: You wrote an article about Indian Moving Day.

Stella: Yes. They came down past the schoolhouse. The bucks were always dressed in their headdresses and the ladies had beautiful shawls. The kids were bawling and the dogs were barking. Then the clatter of the horses. The thing that interested me most was the travois. They would have two poles on each side of the horse, and down here it would cross, and from here to here they would have a sort of cradle or a hammock. They would put their kids in that, drag it along the ground. Kids would be born in the dirt and the dust. I don't see how they ever stood it.

ES: Now, here's another picture of some Indians. I guess they used to come over and take part in the parades a lot. There is one here.

Stella: Well, I was the one that started the UBIC evening pageant. Now, they still have UBIC over at Roosevelt, but we had it at Fort Duchesne first for years.

I had just returned from my mission and they asked me if I would handle the evening program for them. Well, the Indians we used mostly in the morning. In the evenings, we would have pageants with people from Heber to Jensen. Every community would be represented.

ES: How would you communicate with them to get them to prepare something?

Stella: Hilas Smith was the Indian Agent. He was over all of the tribes. He was a white man. You

know, they would always get a very educated man to supervise the whole thing. Then E. Peterson was the county agent, Uintah County Agent. Those two men took me from place to place. They would have to go and see about their work.

For instance, Myton was just a little town, but at that time they were raising alfalfa. So, we had their kids, twenty-five girls, dressed as alfalfa blossoms. I wish you could have seen them. It would start, you know, the color of the blue like the top of the alfalfa, then the dark pink, the next pink, and the next. We would take a knitting needle and curl the thing up. Well, that little community had twenty-five.

ES: Were the costumes made out of paper then?

Stella: Yes.

ES: Crepe paper?

Stella: Yes. Dennison. At that time everything was made of Dennison crepe paper. It was stiff and hard, and, you know, it would last longer. Roosevelt, we had them represent the homeland. Mrs. Ray Dillman, Mrs. Edwards used to teach me in LDS High School in Salt Lake City, and she moved to Roosevelt. Mrs. Edwards handled Roosevelt.

I would find out who was the best leaders in the community and then I would go and get them and we would talk over what they could do and what they would like to do, what they could dance, whatever.

ES: So, each person had so many minutes to do their thing?

Stella: Yes.

ES: Here's another one. That's just the street scene. This is in 1912. This is down by the old Co-op. I guess in the Co-op that they would take [trade] food for groceries?

Stella: Now, this is Billie Untermann's father, I am quite sure. Anyway, in the museum, just as you go in, the Ruple wagon and everything is there.

ES: That would be coming down from where they lived, too. That goes up. You know, that's coming from Steinaker by Penney's building there.

Stella: Well, this isn't the Penney building, is it?

ES: Well, that's the Co-op. That's where JC Penney's is now.

Stella: They have shut up all these windows.

ES: Oh, yes. They put that siding on, you know. Here is another picture of it, right here. It says, "Ashley Co-op" on it.

Stella: I remember these real well. I have a picture, let's see, it was 1911, I believe, and we are in

the middle of the street at the school.

ES: So, you have a picture like that. Here's one with the Bath House on it. Did people come in and take baths as a family or is that just for the ranch hands or shepherders? See that one place, see across there it says "Baths."

Stella: I don't remember that one. We had two or three buggies like this one. Father's mail cart looked like that.

ES: Was he a mailman also? Besides being a teacher?

Stella: He was the second mailman in the valley. You see, Pack was the first one, then Father took the upper route. Pack had the lower route.

ES: Now, what was your father's name again?

Stella: David L. Richards.

ES: So, he was the second mail carrier in the valley.

Stella: Yes. He taught school for years, but he made more money driving mail.

ES: Here's a stagecoach being robbed, a mock hold-up for the parade.

Stella: Yeah. We used to have Indians and white man wars and everything. I think the modern kids would love to see some of the old things we used to do. They would have a "greasy pole," five dollars apiece. The first kid to climb the pole got the five dollars. Grease the Pig: they would grease a pig and turn it loose, and all the kids in the country would go after it. The one that caught the pig got it.

ES: Got to raise it, huh?

Stella: That was very much like we used to have.

ES: Now, did you and your family, did you have chickens and cows or anything like that?

Stella: For a while we did. We didn't the first year. We came without anything.

ES: Did you used to churn with the paddle that went up and down?

Stella: The first one, and then the next one was this way.

ES: The second one you turned the little handle. Did your mother have you all help and take turns?

Stella: Yes, and we had separator. I had to turn that. I would have to drive the milk over to Calder's Creamery.

ES: They made good ice cream, didn't they? I have heard that people would come there and go skating at Calder's Pond. Ice skating?

Stella: They would skate in the wintertime.

ES: Where did the people from Naples skate, or Ashley, either one? Did they come down to Calder's Pond?

Stella: Well, Ashley Creek used to freeze over. A lot of them would go to the creek, but they would come down here, too.

ES: Did Calders flood it and keep it smooth or was it just a natural place?

Stella: I don't know. I guess they kept it up, because there were always a lot of skaters on it.

ES: I know that up at the city park they learned how to first build up around the edges. Then they would take a rolling machine and mash the snow down flat. Then they would just sprinkle it and that would freeze and they would keep putting coats of water on it until it became smooth. They learned that from Logan City. It would make a nice skating area. I remember Glade used to do that when he was on the city council. They made that type of skating pond. When they put the pavilion [Colton Pavilion] up there, they made it so it can be used as a skating pond.

Stella: Well, I don't believe they put salt or did anything to this, because people used it all the time, or drinking and freezing ice cream and everything in the summer. They put the ice in their fridges.

ES: People had ice boxes, didn't they?

Stella: Yes.

ES: In that day they didn't have refrigerators, did they?

Stella: They had an outdoor ice house.

ES: I know that there was an old ice house behind the Siddoways' house. You know, we live up there by the stake center, and the old William Siddoway home was across the street. One day I was over there they showed me where they had an old ice house just out behind their home. They used to put sawdust in the walls. They would fill the walls with sawdust.

Stella: Everybody packed it in sawdust. That's the only way they could keep it.

ES: Did it last all winter? I guess they wouldn't need it in the winter, but from March until

October. Were they able to keep it that long?

Stella: I don't remember that, but I know that we used to have ice. We used to make ice cream all the time. But I don't remember how late it was.

ES: About the Doughboy that is here, do you remember when they moved it? Do you remember what year it was moved from Main Street? We are trying to find out. You know, it used to be in the center of town. They don't know the date when they moved it from there.

Stella: I haven't the slightest idea.

ES: It's over on the lawn now.

Stella: Yes, I noticed it as I came up.

ES: In looking at some of this old film here... You might be interested in seeing that. It takes a little while, but down here we have an old film that was made in Vernal in 1939. How long is your program?

Person: It should be anywhere from twenty minutes to half an hour, somewhere around there.

ES: Now, we, as people who have lived here and knowing people, we enjoy looking for faces, but I think it is interesting just to see the old cars and old hair-dos.

Person: Some of the ladies in the sorority are from Vernal, like Pat Searle. She was a nurse.

ES: She would probably know a lot of these people.

Person: Margaret Franke has been here most of her life.

ES: She could probably tell who's in the picture. It is down here. If you want to see that, you could have your program in the multi-purpose room here, and show the film.

Person: I have to do this at a lady's house. This has really got a lot of information in it. It tells all about the first theaters, and the movies they ran, and when they ran them, and all about the Opera House. So, they had a lot of information in it.

ES: Have you run into all three of those, the Main, the Vernal and the Vogue? I thought that would have more information. I didn't think of it at first. As I said, I haven't had time to go through and index it or read all of it. Some of it I know, but some I don't.

Stella: We have two books, the old one and the new one. I have the old one. [She is referring to the *Builders of Uintah*, published by the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. It was first printed in 1947; a second printing appeared several years later. In 2002 it was printed for the third time in a paperback edition. The text of the various printings is identical.]

ES: When you taught school up in Ashley, I guess the children brought their own lunch, didn't they?

Stella: You know, I think I might have started school lunches. It was a hard winter. I had the kids bring milk, or anything that they could, butter, you know, we made soup. They would bring vegetables and things. We had a big pot-bellied stove and I had a big iron kettle.

ES: Put some water in and put all the vegetables in?

Stella: We put the vegetables in, or we would have hot chocolate, and, you know, something to go with that. We would make different things on different days. One day, Ella Stringham came down. She said, "Well, that's something new!" And she started it in Maeser. Now, we had never heard of it before, but in three or four years, everybody was doing it.

ES: She was the superintendent of schools, wasn't she? She had something to do with the school board.

Stella: That wasn't Ella. That was Bea.

ES: I remember that one of the tapes said that Bea Stringham had come to the school. But this was Ella.

Stella: This is another one. Ella was quite a bit older than Bea.

ES: So, that kind of started the local hot lunch program?

Stella: Yes. Well, I had never heard of it, but I can still see the kids coming through the snow with their bottles in a stocking. You know, they would put their bottle in the stocking and carry it, and a little bucket of potatoes, and a few carrots, or onions, or whatever they were assigned.

ES: And so you had soup! Well, that was good! I think Bry Stringham was one that helped in the legislature to get the hot lunch program funded for the children finally.

Stella: Well, Ella was Bry's sister-in-law.

ES: I think that they have always been interested in that phase of the school program. How many students did you have out there approximately? Did you have all different grades in one room?

Stella: Well, at first. Do you know Eva Hatch?

ES: Yes.

Stella: Well, I had her in the first grade and up to the fourth, but eventually, I had only the third and fourth.

ES: She plays the piano by ear. Did she play the piano? Did you have a piano at school? Did she play the piano when she was a young girl?

Stella: Well, she was just a little kid, see. She went to the first grade and the second, third, and fourth.

ES: I just wondered if that seemed to be an early talent. I know when I was young, I sat down. I don't know why, but I could hear a tune. I wouldn't want to play it for church or anywhere, but I could hear the tune and I don't know how I knew where to play it, but I could play it. I don't know why I could do that, but I just wondered if she did that when she was young, as she plays by ear, too.

Stella: She had two sisters that were older who were in the upper grades. I used to go to their home. My dances and things were there. I lived in Naples. I would go and stay with them overnight and go to some of their dances.

ES: When you were teaching, did you walk to school or did you ride a horse to school?

Stella: Well, I rode a horse and I lived with them.

ES: At Maeser?

Stella: No, at Maeser I lived with Lloyd and Bertha most of the time. There were two years that I rode with... I can't tell you their name, but I can see their faces. When you get ninety-two, I don't know.

ES: You are doing great! You said you went with someone for a couple of years. How did you go with them? In a buggy or a car?

Stella: Well, down at Ashley I would, or Union Ward. I always rode a horse. When I taught in Naples, I usually walked. It was just about a mile, but then we had a buggy if I had wanted it.

ES: It was easier just to walk probably, huh?

Stella: Yes. Then when I taught in Davis, Frank Slaugh taught out there at the same time that I did, and I rode with Frank and Arthur Manwaring.

ES: Frank. Is he Shirley Slaugh's dad? Mary's husband? He also worked in the post office for a while, didn't he? Seems like he was working in the post office when I came to Vernal.

Stella: I worked in the post office a lot of the time, too.

ES: Was that in Naples or Vernal?

Stella: Under Eddie Young in the DUP Museum, just as you enter, there is a picture of Dad and his mail cart with, I guess it was over a hundred catalogs that he was to deliver this day. It's a great big pile. He couldn't get them all in his cart, but they came out and took his picture. There's Father and Dicky Jensen and Eddie Young, and I. We are standing by this mail cart and the catalogs.

ES: I'll have to see that. They were telling about when the Bank of Vernal was built that the brick came in parcel post, and the first batch that came in, the postman was determined that it would go through the post office, because that was sort of a rule that they had, to go through the office. So, they put them in the back room, and they would have to take them out the front. So, then he [the postmaster] finally got smart and let them unload the wagon over at the bank. He had had to unload it and take it to the bank himself on the first load, so after that, he let them go deliver them over there at the bank. But that was really an interesting thing to have all that brought in by parcel post.

Stella: Well, you see, wrapping each brick, each brick!

ES: They said it was cheaper to send it that way, you know. I guess they would have had to haul it by wagon or something, but anyway, the parcel post was best.

Stella: It used to take three weeks. It took us three weeks to come from Salt Lake when I was three years old. I still remember fried potatoes and bacon, and the fried potatoes done on a sagebrush campfire.

ES: I bet that it was kind of an adventure, wasn't it?

Stella: Well, the thunder and lightning was, I'm telling you! Sometimes we would have to stay one and two or three days for the flood to go through before we could get through. So, we could get through Red Creek and Currant Creek.

ES: I know where Currant Creek is. Is Red Creek the one over there in what they call Halfway Hollow, where that bridge is? Is that Red Creek? I know I have seen it there somewhere. I don't remember where.

What was Strawberry like, Strawberry Valley? You went through that, but the reservoir wasn't there, so I guess that was just kind of a meadow or something.

Stella: Yes. There were a lot of beaver dams through there usually. We used to see the beaver dams all along.

ES: Was Heber always sort of a little city there? Was it fun to go through Heber or did they stop there for a couple days or what?

Stella: I don't remember at all.

ES: At that time, maybe they went up to Park City on the way to Salt Lake. Did they go up

around that way?

Stella: I don't know. When Father came, he went down to Price. They told him that he could get on the freight wagons at Price and come in. When he got to Price, the freight wagons were so full that he rode a little bit, but whenever they went down or up steep hills and things, he had to get out and help push them up.

ES: I wonder if they took any off of their fare when they had to get out and help push. Did you ever ride on the old Uintah Railway?

Stella: When I went on my first mission, I went out to Mack. Edith McCoy was just a young girl then. Do you remember Edith?

ES: No.

Stella: You don't. Edith McCoy, from Maeser. She went out on the same day that I did.

ES: Where did you go on your first mission?

Stella: Well, I was in the whole eastern part. I went first to West Virginia, then to New York, then to Massachusetts.

ES: What part of West Virginia? Was it the north or the south?

Stella: I went to Huntington. I like Huntington. I like the people.

ES: Then, did you go on another mission after that?

Stella: I went to four others. You know, I was teaching school and there was nothing to do in the summer time. There were enough kids at home to take care of the garden, and I would just go and either do genealogy or go on a mission. I went to Seattle, and to Tacoma, and to Vancouver and Eugene.

ES: Would you just go for the three summer months or would you go a full two years?

Stella: Yes. [The summer months.]

ES: That was a good thing.

Stella: But I think I did as much good in the summer as I did in a year in the mission field.

ES: In other words, as I get the picture here, in the early days, Ashley was a little community in itself. Naples was a little community, and up in Dry Fork they had a little community, and before transportation came, where everyone could get together pretty rapidly, they more or less had social events centered in each community.

Stella: We used little buggies.

ES: So, they kind of had a social life in each little community, a school and church?

Stella: Yes, every ward.

ES: Probably a store and a post office in each area?

Stella: No. There was a post office only in Vernal.

ES: Well, there was one here, but at one time, way back, there was one up in Dry Fork. There was one at old Ashley Town. There was one here. There was one at Jensen, way back, you know. Through all the years, they all moved into Vernal. [Except Jensen.]

I kind of get a picture from what people tell me of things that happened. Like Erma Taylor said that up in Dry Fork at one time they had a school, and a church, and a post office and a store.

Stella: Well, they had that in Maeser, too. But in Naples I don't believe they did, or in Fourth Ward or Glines. They didn't in Davis. They didn't in Ashley Ward. There was Dry Fork, Maeser, Vernal, and Jensen. Those four.

ES: Let's see. What else would be interesting to know?

Stella: My last mission, I think I did more than all the rest of them put together. When I went to be set apart, and after he gave me my blessing, I thought, "That was an elegant piece of oratory." I just kind of smiled. He said, "The Lord will place every modern convenience in your hands this summer." And he just went on and told me things that were going to happen. Of course, I had been on so many missions that I thought it was just a wonderful piece of oratory. That's what I really thought.

Well, when I went to Eugene [Oregon], as I got there from one side of the street over to the other to the other side of the street, there was a big sign: "Oregon Trail Pageant — July 22nd, 23rd, 24th." And I said to my landlady, she wasn't LDS, and I didn't have a companion because, you see, I went alone. I didn't have a companion. This lady had kept Mormon missionaries. They said that she was lovely and, "We have made arrangements for you to stay with her." So, I said to her, "That's right up my alley! I would sure like to get in on that!" She said, "We'll see that you do!"

Well, she went to see them and a Mrs. Smith that they had hired from the East came to direct it. It was under Hal Young, he was the music teacher at the University of Oregon. They already had two thousand people, actors, two thousand, to take part. When I went and talked to Mrs. Smith, she said, "I would love to have some of your people in it." She said, "You know, this spring they invited me to come down to Portland and judge the dancing, the singing, the drama, and the music." Music and drama, speech and dance. Well, she said, "You know, I had never seen anything like it in my life!"

She said, "I would go to these places, the dances, and you wouldn't see a cigarette, you

wouldn't see a bottle." She says, "It would be just as clean when we left as when we come." And she said, "I never heard a curse word. I had never seen anything like it in my life. I would sure like to get some of them."

She said, "Well, now let's see. What can you have?" She said, "You couldn't have the pioneers because we are having five prairie schooners, and each prairie schooner will have two yoke of oxen, great big oxen." You see, Oregon is one of the places where they have so much timber.

"Well, what can you put in?" she said. "We have five hundred in one dance, and they are all dressed in satins and everything. I want something special."

In a minute or two I said, "Well, you don't have any handcars."

"That's it," she said. "Do you think you could get two?"

My heart went clear down, only two in a program that size. I said, "Well, we could try. Could we put more in if we can get them?"

"Put in whatever you can." She gave us twenty-five minutes. So, the people, some of them had to come twenty-five, thirty, and forty miles to church, and we had all these people hunting for wheels so we could make handcars. They made twenty. I have got a picture of them. They made twenty handcars.

One of the newsmen said to someone when he heard about the fact that we were going to help put on the pageant, he asked one of them, "How many do you think we will have?"

He said, "Well, we are pretty well scattered out up here." He said, "Oh, maybe three hundred, or maybe four hundred."

Well, the next Saturday the paper came out and said, "Four thousand Mormons invading Eugene!" — for the pageant! Four thousand!! Well, do you know, the high school gave us two of their great big dormitories. They gave us two dormitories. We got three buses with a bus driver. The Elks gave us their kitchen, their living room, their everything. The Moose and the Elks both gave us room so that women and their kids could sit down and rest and everything. Well, it just scared me to death. I was just petrified.

Person: What year was this pageant?

Stella: Well, I believe it was about 1933, but I am not sure. But they had us the next two.

ES: So, how did the production go?

Stella: Well, I sent the newspaper up to Preston Nibley. He was our mission president. He called all the missionaries from the Northwest to come. So, we had a hundred and twenty-four missionaries, and then the local people. They all dressed as pioneers. They had built a mountain system with a ramp that the ox team and things could come up the back, and then they would twist around and come down the mountain and out in front of the audience.

Well, when it came our turn, these were out here in front of the audience cooking their suppers, you know. The oxen, beautiful scene. Here we were coming up the ramp with our twenty handcars. Well, when we got to the top of the mountain, they turned the lights off from there and turned them on us. So, we came down the mountain singing "Come, Come Ye Saints." We had one lady that was sick and she was stumbling and they would help her along. She got right in front of the audience and she died.

ES: Not really? You mean she really died?

Stella: She was supposed to have died. Everybody in the audience, you see, we were singing “Come, Come Ye Saints” and you could see that we were tired out and everything. All her children came and knelt beside her and cried. Others came to show their love. Then finally, four men with shovels and picks went to dig the grave. As they left the scene, we sang [the fourth verse of “Come, Come Ye Saints”], “And should we die before our journey’s through, happy day, all it well.”

ES: So, you took up your twenty-five minutes all right.

Stella: Yes, and then, of course, we went through the parades and everything. In about three weeks here came a letter from London from President Grant. He happened to be in London and he [saw] the two newsmen who came, that were sent to the pageant to see it through. The headline of their article was, “The Mormon Handcart Company Highlights the Great Eugene Pageant.”

ES: So, you were a success!

Stella: I guess so! Oh, but you don’t know how scared I was, though. If I had my history that I gave the seventh grade, I would let you have it. It is the history of this basin.

ES: Would you like me to type that history for you?

Stella: I would be tickled to death if you would. Once a year instead of a Christmas card I send them something. This is a long one, but I don’t want the Meeker Massacre in it. This is the one, “The Pioneer Episode.” This is pre-history. I got part of this from Paul Harvey in it. This last part tells how we got Utah. We would have been Mexicans if it hadn’t been for the Mormon pioneers. This tells about how we come to be Americans instead of Mexicans, because in 1847, to February the second, 1848, Brigham Young and all the pioneers were Mexicans. They were in Mexican Territory and under Mexican government. But the Mormon Battalion went down and helped turn this whole western area—California, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Arizona—and when Brigham Young came there were no states or anything. He started planning colonies, in Nevada he had colonies. He had colonies in Colorado. He had colonies in Wyoming. He was going to have the whole territory.

But finally, the United States began dividing it up and so they cut it up into states. Some of the Mormons were in Colorado and some of them were in California.

ES: Glade’s people came over from Colorado. There was a settlement in Alamosa, Colorado.

Stella: That’s where I got it.

ES: I think these Daughters of the Utah Pioneers book are so unique. They have all the little histories. Erma Taylor was telling how they used to write the stories up in each camp and send

them in. I hadn't known that that was how they got a lot of the stories.

Stella: Of course, that's just a little one. Grandfather kept a record from the time he was about eighteen or nineteen years old. How he was converted and came over and went through Nauvoo after the pioneers had all been driven out, you know. The homes were all open. You could go in, the doors were open, there was food on the tables and on the stoves. The people just moved out. That's how he came to be one. He hadn't been with these that had settled in this place and that place.

ES: Do you remember, they talk about people here having a flu epidemic. I believe it was...

Stella: '18.

ES: 1918. Do you remember that? Did you have any of your family members who were ill?

Stella: Do I? Do I? I was one of the nurses in the emergency hospital up in the Episcopal church.

ES: The Episcopal church, that building behind there? They said that when the people went to town that they would wear masks. Did you have school and the kids wear masks?

Stella: Well, they didn't have school for a month or two. I'm telling you, people were dying all around.

ES: What did they think? What kind of flu was it? Was it pneumonia or a bad virus? What was it like? Did they get a cough, a temperature or what?

Stella: I don't remember, but I remember I did a lot of nursing. When I got through there I went to Don B. Colton's. His family had it. He and his wife were afraid to go in and take care of the kids. So, I went in and took care of them. Ethel was the older one.

ES: You know, I remember my grandmother back in West Virginia. They got typhoid. My aunt was telling me that the family was all sick. They told my grandmother that they wanted to help her. She says, "Well, I can do the nursing. I can take care of my own family." They were going to send her a nurse. "If you want to send someone, send someone to help me cook." But people were afraid and no one would come to help. They finally got over it, but they all were so sick.

They also tell about the Depression. What was it like in the schools? It seems like that they say that everyone shared with each other and tried to help each other. The main problem was that they had food, but they didn't have money. They probably had the necessities, but no luxuries.

Stella: You see, Dad, he was a schoolteacher and he got paid. He went on teaching.

ES: You didn't feel that as much as somebody else might have.

Stella: No. Of course, we always raised a garden.

ES: I guess you dried food a lot, didn't you? They didn't have canning facilities or places to store things.

Stella: Have you seen that little pioneer plaque at Roberts Hall? Well, that Mr. Roberts used to make jars. He had a certain kind of clay and he would make five-gallon jars, and they were just as white and smooth and beautiful. We would make preserves and pickles and things and all that you could keep. They wouldn't be fresh.

ES: And that was his trade? He made these jars and sold them to people? Were they like crockery?

Stella: Yeah. They were just a big, round jar with a lid over it. We used to have half a dozen lined up. Later, when we didn't have bottles on our place, we used five-gallon cans. We canned tomatoes, and plums, and apricots, and the peaches. We put them in these five-gallon cans. We had enough bottles. You know, you open them and heat them again and put them in the bottles.

ES: Now, was this the first hospital that they had here? The one up there behind the Episcopal church? There was one down where the theater was, wasn't there?

Stella: I don't know whether there was another one or not. I don't remember. The only thing I can remember is working in that one.

ES: When did you work in that? Was it summer?

Stella: No, it was in the winter. School was closed. They didn't have school.

ES: So, while school was closed, you worked there, then.

Stella: Three, or four, or five months. I worked while it was closed.

ES: So, you helped, kind of like a nurse's aid?

Stella: I hadn't had any training at all, but I got plenty there.

ES: You learned all about it, huh? The people who got the flu, did some of them die while you were there?

Stella: We lost two, one was a doctor. But it seemed like there were funerals every day.

ES: That's what I have been told. The people who lived on the way to the cemetery could just see it every day, two or three people going out with a casket. They said that it hit the young men a lot.

In your schools did you have a piano, or an organ, or anything like that? Do you play the

piano?

Stella: No, but I had a special way of teaching music. I always got the best singers in the school to come to my room and teach the kids to sing. Do you remember Mr. Lee that used to teach here?

ES: Lawrence? I remember him.

Stella: You know, just a year or two before he quit, he won the sextette of the state. Five of them were kids that I had had teach. Two of them from Jensen, and one from Dry Fork, and two from Maeser, was in this sextette, and his daughter was the other one.

ES: So, you would get someone to help. Even though you didn't play, you would get someone who could do it for you?

Stella: They would sing, and then have the kids sing with them.

ES: That's good. I noticed in the old pictures that women wore long dresses, down to the ankles, you know. Was it shocking after a while when they started wearing them shorter? What was the reaction of people when they started wearing them shorter?

Stella: Of course, people didn't like to show their legs, but maybe some of them did. Everybody thought it was just a little bit "too" having a short dress. But then, they didn't come up like they did a few years ago.

ES: When my girls went to school, they got up to the miniskirts, you know. My daughter, Olivia, she went to school one day and we had taken her to Salt Lake to ZCMI because I thought the Church owned the store partly, you know, and they would have some modest clothes. We really couldn't find extra long ones, but we got the longest ones we could find. So, this day, she had been sent to the principal's office. The teacher had sent her to the principal for having a short skirt. So, when she got up to the principal's office, he said, "Well, your teacher must really be strict, your skirt isn't too short." But she admitted to us later that she had rolled the skirt band over a couple of times at the waist, you know, so that it looked stylish like the other girls', but then when she was going down the hall to the principal's office, she rolled it back.

Later, I was talking to Marietta Wardle, who works in Ashtons Store one day, and she was laughing about it. She said that she had done the same thing when she was a young girl, so they say history repeats itself. I guess it does.

Stella: Well, I wish I could think of something interesting to tell you, but a ninety-two-year-old mind is, you know, it's like in Sunday school. I'm afraid to answer questions because when I come to a name, I can't think of it. Come to a certain word and if I haven't used it for very long, I can't think of it. So, I listen mostly.

ES: I think you do great, Sister Richards. I have always admired you. I have only been here for thirty years, but I have never heard anything but good things about you.

Stella: You know, I was either to Salt Lake or from Salt Lake with your mother one time. She told me a lot about you and your husband. How he came to visit you, was it in Virginia or West Virginia, or where?

ES: In West Virginia.

Stella: He saw your picture on the piano or somewhere?

ES: Yes, it was on the piano.

Stella: That was to be his.

ES: She said he kept asking questions about me. I kid him about that once in a while. He always tells everybody that he fell in love with my mother and he couldn't marry her, so he married me "second hand." But, she was a nice person.

In your family, did you ever used to order out of the catalog?

Stella: We used to. Haven't for a year or two. Now, for instance, I made these things that I have got on by hand.

ES: Oh, they are nice.

Stella: I just got to the place where I didn't have anything to do, so I made them. So, I just bought material and did a bit of sewing.

ES: They are beautiful. I love the coordinated colors. Have you always sewed a little bit through your life? I was noticing your pictures. You had some pictures and I was noticing how beautiful you were in your pictures. You had a hat on and you looked especially beautiful there.

Irrelevant conversation.

ES: Who was the president of the [LDS] Stake when you were a young girl?

Stella: Well, I remember President Smart.

ES: William Smart.

Stella: Then there was Don Colton. Calder... What's his name?

ES: Was Wallace the president or Hyrum Calder?

Stella: Weren't they both for a while?

ES: I don't know.

Stella: It seems to me like they both were, one and then the other. I'm not right sure, as I say.

ES: I remember Archie Johnson was president when I first came.

Stella: Johnson, I think, followed Calder.

ES: And then President Frank Walker, and President Wallis, then my husband [Glade Sowards], and President Haws.

Stella: I taught President Haws and President Jolley. Every Christmas I get a poinsettia from President Jolley and every Easter, an Easter lily. I got one this year, six beautiful lilies on the top.

ES: You really have a family of students, don't you?

Stella: Well, I imagine. I taught forty years. I think I would have over an average of thirty-six in a class. Now, you know, in the early days there were some where I didn't have very big ones, but up in Maeser, I had as high as forty-five in a room.

ES: Today a lot of the teachers and everyone, they really complain if there are over thirty students in a room. You know, they want to have smaller classes. Do you think this is bad? Do you think they should have smaller classes if possible? Did you feel more effective in a smaller class or do you think it made that much difference?

Stella: Do you know... What was the last superintendent's name?

ES: JC Haws?

Stella: No, school superintendent.

ES: Vest?

Stella: After Vest.

ES: There is Oldroyd, J.C. Haws, Ashel Evans.

Stella: Before that.

ES: Harold Lundell?

Stella: Yeah. Lundell. Well, my kids nearly always averaged up above, usually, no matter where I taught, usually they were the top kids. The tests were given by other teachers and graded by others. I don't know. One day I knew Lundell was coming down and I didn't know why, but I knew I was on the spot for some reason. He came in and he said, "Do you know that there are two kids sitting out there, outside your door? Sitting on the floor there?"

And I said, "Well, they are working, aren't they?"

He says, "Well, there's two of them sitting out there."

I said, "One of them can't read and the other one is reading a lesson to him."

That was my way, one kid helped another. And then, I had a long bench made as long as this table. Just wide enough for kids, four of them. I had them in my room. One would be here and one down here. I would divide my kids up. I had around, I guess, thirty-six. I had two grades. I would put a third grader here and a third grader here. There were kids that could hardly read, and I would let them say, "You can read next, and you can read next." But I would have a good reader to tell the word that the kid didn't know. I had four reading classes going all the time. I would go from one to the other, you see.

ES: You say you would have a child that could read and one that couldn't read sitting next to each other so they could help each other?

Stella: No, I had about twelve here and about twelve here, and twelve here and twelve here. The one that couldn't read would tell the kids in that twelve which one could read next. Now, I would do that, see. He didn't feel left out because he had something to do. The one that was a good reader, and, of course, there were enough good readers, you could pass that around, you could tell them where to stand and tell them the words, so I had four going. Well, can you see why my kids read better? I had four of them reading at once, rather than just one. I had reading class. One from the third grade and one from the fourth. The fourth would stand here. You would have one kid stand up, then another and another. Over here, the third grade, one here and one here. Four of them reading.

Well, then it came time for geography or history. I would say, "Well, shoot, we don't care what *they* think about the reading. You ask your own questions. Wouldn't you rather ask someone else one of your questions than answering questions from this book?" Well, they would have to read and read well to find a question. And they loved to do it. Lots of times: "Can we do more than six or seven?"

ES: They wanted to do more than the book?

Stella: The good workers will always do more than they are asked. So, I would think, let them go ahead and make as many questions as they wanted. They would ask each other their questions. Well, instead of reading the questions in the book, the kids made their own questions.

ES: They were more interested. That's a good idea.

Stella: Another day he came. Now, he came once a week. Then, you know, the superintendent doesn't usually come only once every three or four months, but when you get him coming every week, you know something is wrong.

He came one day and I was trying to teach long division to the fourth grade. I had tried for two or three days. This one kids could not get it, he couldn't get it. The rest of them could do it pretty well. It was going pretty good until at the end of the class I said to one of the best workers, one that I thought would handle it, I said, "You go sit with him. You are excused from all of your subjects for tomorrow, but this kid is supposed to know how to do long division."

Well, Lundell just went up, imagine, telling that boy to teach the other one long division. That kid sat with his arm around this boy, and they sat there, and in the middle of the class, and I was over here, this kid jumped up and hollered, "Whoopee! I can do it!" Now, see, he just sat there and showed him every step, time after time, until he got it. Well, I used that method.

ES: You had your kids help. That's what I think. We always had more than thirty in our classes, and it seems like as we got older the teacher would say, "Now, pass your papers back," after we would take a quiz, and so, we would pass our papers back and when he thought we had passed them far enough so that your friend would not grade your paper, he would have us keep changing them, then he would say, "Stop." Then you didn't have your friend grading your paper. You couldn't have someone change the answers. Some kids used to cheat, so that way we would all help grade the papers. I think lots of times you have to do that when you have a big class. You have to use your students to help.

Stella: Well, I used mine to teach. I found out that they could do a pretty good job. I got two kids in the third grade that didn't know one single word, and I wondered why. Finally, someone said, "I'll tell you why. When that teacher was a young girl, she was always flirting around with the boys. One day a bunch of boys got drunk and they got her drunk and undressed her." She wouldn't work with them. She just set them off in a corner and they came to my room and didn't know a word. One of those, the one that was sitting out here and couldn't read, I had the other kid reading to him. Well, when they grew up, they turned out pretty good. It wasn't because they were so dumb they couldn't.

ES: So, you had to help them so they could read then.

[There is an omission here in the original. ES is speaking when the original continues.]

ES: I have got some history on that.

Stella: Van Gundy, remember Van Gundy? But when you read about the last of that where we got the whole western world from Kansas City to the Pacific, from Oregon to the Mexican border, every bit of that came by Nicholas O. Trist. He did it illegally. James K. Polk had sent him with the treaty to sign with the Mexicans. I don't know whether he had talked to the Mormons or not. But anyway, he must have followed the same trail down and about the same time and everything. But he wrote and told James K. Polk that he had another plan and wanted Polk to accept it. It said that Polk was furious. He told him to come back home. He didn't. He stayed down there and made a treaty on his own, nothing to do with the United States government at all. Just himself and the Mexicans. He made the treaty and he got all of this western land, from Oregon to Mexico, from Kansas to the ocean. Every bit of it, for fifteen million dollars. His plan was so good that the government accepted it, but they put him out. He was at the head of the [state department].

I got this through Paul Harvey. This nephew of ours that's in the national education sent us Paul Harvey's book and that's where I got my information, from Paul Harvey. You'll read it in the last material I brought.

And then, you skip the Meeker Massacre, and then there's *Uintah Today*, well, that's by,

do you remember Teddy Longhurst? Did you live here at the time of Teddy Longhurst?

ES: I have heard the name, but I don't remember him.

Stella: And Israel Clark, Mrs.... I can't think of her name. It starts with 'C'. But her mother is a Hatch. Vida? No.

ES: I know Vida Hatch, Earl's wife.

Stella: It isn't Vida, it's another. But this Israel Clark, I invited Johnny Karren, he was a pioneer before us, I invited him to come to my fourth grade and tell some of the pioneer stories. He said this Israel Clark came when they just had a little log cabin, and his wife was sitting by the table, crying. He said, "Why, Mrs. Karren, what is the matter? Why are you crying?"

"Because," she said, "I'll never see my people again. They live in Lehi. It takes three weeks to get to Vernal and three weeks to go back. We have a big family and a lot of cattle. There are crops to take care of." And she said, "I'll never, never see a one of my people anymore."

And he said, "Why, Mrs. Karren, you shouldn't cry. You don't know the wonderful opportunity the Lord has given you." He said, "You're helping to lay the foundation of this country." He said, "Mrs. Karren, one day there will be an ocean to ocean highway pass right in front of your home."

When Brother Karren was talking to us, he said, "Now, see, he nearly hit it." He said, "It comes over to the corner, now, that's where Verna's place was, it went up to Hullinger's Corner then, but two years later it went right in front of it."

And he [Clark] says, "Your descendants will live to see a train come from the southwest." Well, if the oil shale goes, where will it come? It will come from down here.

He said, "Your descendants will hear a train whistle between your house and the cemetery." He said, "Vernal will have skyscrapers." Oh, he told a lot of things.

And then this Teddy Longhurst, E.J. Longhurst, he used to talk a lot, but he was never asked to speak in church because, I guess, he was so far ahead of other people that they thought he was... I did.

Now, when I was president of the Mutual [LDS youth organization], we took George Slaugh and Owen Slaugh. Their two buses took us up to the Brush Creek Caves for an outing at Iron Springs. We went up and had a lovely day, and when we were coming home we saw a man walking down this way after we started down the mountain. I said to George Slaugh, "That looks like Teddy Longhurst." So, he picked them up. Of course, I was president of the Primary [LDS children's organization] and I was right at the head when he got on, and I says, "Well, Teddy, what in the world are you walking clear down here for?"

He said, "I have been up at Flaming Gorge. I have spent two days and three nights up there studying the time when we have a reservoir and a dam."

Ina Chivers and I looked at each other and winked, you know, which said, "Just a story."

"A dam from one mountain to another mountain and a reservoir that will reach back."

Well, of course, we all smiled. It was a big story, a big story. Well, two years later I went to Salt Lake, and Verna, that's Floyd's wife's mother, Mrs. Vernon, was in Salt Lake doing temple work, but she hadn't been very well.

Bertha said, "While you are in Salt Lake doing temple work, will you run over to

Mother's and see if she has plenty to eat and plenty of bedding, and look around and see if she has everything that she needs. See if we need to help her anymore."

So, one day, I went over to Sister Vernon's and while we were sitting there talking, why, here came Teddy Longhurst. In the midst of the conversation, he said, "Well, I just came from a lot of business people here in Salt Lake. We have been talking about the dam and the reservoir that we are going to have built at the Flaming Gorge."

And I thought, "Well, maybe we weren't so smart as we thought!"

ES: Well, maybe he knew what was going to happen here.

Stella: It was like that. There were a lot of things. Where you come into the valley, he said an angel met him once there and he said that the angel told him about the temple that was to be built in the west mountains of Vernal and what a beautiful valley it would be. He said, when the whole valley was either lit by candles or oil lamps, he made the prediction, he says, "Well, I have seen this whole valley lighted with electricity."

He said, "It's going to be lighted up." And he said, "Not only Vernal, but out to Horseshoe Bend." Now, I believe that's Red Wash today. He said, "And a lot of little towns west of Vernal." He said, "They are all going to be lighted up! We aren't going to have coal oil lamps all the time."

And then, he finally told us about the Dyer Mine. He said, "The time came in Vernal when people were just destitute." He said, "There were so many kids, they didn't have school rooms enough for them." He said, "They had to hold their courts, had to hold courts in somebody's home. There was no courthouse." And he said, "There was no bank." He said, "We were destitute." And he said, "All at once someone found it [the Dyer Mine]."

ES: The Dyer Mine, huh?

Stella: The Dyer Mine. And he said, "The ore was so rich that they loaded it on the camels, the camels carried it down to Mack [Colorado], and put it on the train, and went and it continued until they had built an eight-room schoolhouse, the old Central School. The Co-op was their bank in Vernal. The Co-op was the bank as well as the main store. And do you remember the courthouse?

ES: Yes.

Stella: The beautiful old courthouse that we had? Well, he said, "Until those buildings were finished that just produced and produced."

ES: I have got some pictures of the courthouse. They are really nice. Do you have a picture of the courthouse?

Stella: No. But I sure remember it. I have been there in it many times. And he said that as quick as those were all paid for, the mines closed. Well, in my one book, not my poems, but the other one, it tells about Brigham Young, saying the Lord could move the ore wherever he wanted it, and, you know, that same thing happened in many of the pioneer villages, that they would have

big room for a while and plenty of money, and all at once it would quit.

ES: Kind of work out...

Stella: Lose out. And Teddy Longhurst said, "And it will stay out until the new era." And we're looking for a new era, aren't we?

ES: Yes, kind of our "gold" is that in oil shale, I guess, this day and age.

Stella: Well, he said that our big prosperity would come in the new era. Now listen, you will find some very lovely stories in that, not my poem one, but the other one. The first one starts with Brother Franklin, Billy Franklin. He was an old man, old man, and he knew Joseph Smith, and he used to tell the story of how Joseph Smith took the Book of Mormon back to the Hill Cumorah, and how the hill opened up and how Joseph Smith went in and the things he saw. Well, I often wondered about that story until I read it in Brigham Young. Then, I thought, "Well, the old man knew what he was talking about. He told it just exactly as Brigham Young did. The two stories in *Gems of Eternal Value*..."

ES: I was going to show you the courthouse. It's forty-three and forty-four.

Stella: I put the little red scales that the workers at Dyer Mine... They didn't work on Sunday, but the employees would gather the gold dust, and the few little nuggets, on Sundays, and they used this little red scale that's up there in the Pioneer Museum. If you want to look at it, it's up there in the museum. I used to just love that building. That's our dear, old courthouse.

ES: I thought it was pretty. That's where we got our marriage license. Now, this, they said, was "Lover's Lane," right through there, up through the trees. Oh, I guess I got the wrong number on that one.

Stella: Well, let me see this. I see a Manwaring.

ES: Let's see, that's from Uintah Academy. If you know some of them, we should write their names down.

Stella: Well, this is a Manwaring.

ES: Is that Harold Hullinger?

Stella: Whereabouts?

ES: That one you are touching?

Stella: No. That's Manwaring, a teacher. I don't know who that is. That's Charlie Colton, I believe. Here is another teacher.

ES: Let's see, what number is that? That's 343. I ought to get you those Naples ones. I think I have got some of Naples that I don't know who everybody is.

Stella: Now, this is younger than me. Here's Mary Winder Manwaring. Mary Winder Johnson, Emma Olson.

Well, I'll bet that I am on here. I know I am, but I don't know where, because this is one of '04-'06, and I went, let's see, when the reservation opened was '05, so I am on here. I would be one of the little kids.

ES: Let's go back to the school, here, and I can write on this one, this other one, right here. Let's talk about this one. That's the same one you have here.

This one is a little more clear. I've got a magnifying glass. Sometimes you can see their faces a little more clearly and it will help. If you look at them through there, you can see who they are a little better.

Stella: Well, I am sure that's Mary Manwaring.

ES: This is Mary. This one.

Stella: No, Mary Winder Johnson.

ES: She is Burtron's mother, right? Burtron Johnson. Did she have a boy named Burtron?

Stella: I don't know her kids. I am quite sure that's Emma Olson.

ES: This is a Manwaring, right here?

Stella: Hyrum, Hyrum B. Manwaring.

ES: Now, is he a father to the Manwaring boys that we know?

Stella: No, I think his father and the Manwarings' grandfather were cousins. Now, here's a lot of these that I know, but I can't think of their names. I am quite sure that that other teacher is Charlie Colton. I'm not right sure. Charlie Colton.

ES: I'll put a question mark there. That will show that we are not sure. Maybe if we get two or more people that think it is, we might verify it. This is in 1918. I imagine some of these people went to war. Some of these young boys.

Stella: So many of these seem familiar, but, well, I can't help you.

ES: Maybe with that magnifying glass. Maybe you can see where you are on this other one.

Stella: No, I don't recognize anyone.

ES: Did you finally learn to drive? How old were you when you learned to drive?

Stella: Well, I didn't buy a car of my own until I was teaching in Jensen. I can't tell you when that was.

ES: Would it have been during the '30s or '40s? Before the Second World War?

Stella: Oh, I guess I must have been forty or somewhere along there, I believe.

ES: How did you learn to drive?

Stella: Well, it's like this. I started ten or fifteen years before when my dad had an old Model T. I was on the Sunday school stake board, and Ben was taking me up to Glines Ward to Sunday school, and he said, "I can't come and get you." He had something else he had to do and I said, "All right, you get out and walk home and I'll drive myself." And I hadn't driven, but I felt I could.

He said, "How do you start it and how do you stop it?" He showed me, so when I got to Glines Ward, I didn't press on the brake hard enough, so I went down in the ditch. Then, after that was fixed, a week or two later, I was driving to town and a kid ran out, and, well, I missed him, I guess, a yard or two, but it scared the life out of me. I saw this kid run out, you know, and I thought, "I can't stop like I did." So, I just decided, I'm not going to drive.

ES: It scared you a little bit.

Stella: Scared me to death! And I just didn't drive until I started teaching in Jensen, and then I bought a car.

ES: So, then did you have to take a driver's test, at that time? How did they check to see if you

knew how to drive?

Stella: Well, I learned to drive. I got [the car] from Lorin Merrell, he kept selling, and I said, "I'm not going to drive. I'm not learning to drive a car."

"Oh, come and go with me for a ride." He finally coaxed me to go for a ride. After we got a little ways, he says, "Slide over under the wheel." I said, "I will not!"

"Slide under the wheel." He said, "I'll be sitting right here. I can do anything," he said. So, I slid under and we went to Jensen and back. When we got back and I had driven to Jensen and back, I said, "How much is it?"

"Well, if you want it, you will have to tell me tonight," he said. "Monday," (now this is Saturday), "Monday the man's coming to pick it up, but I'll sell it to you, if you want it. And if you don't on Monday I will sell it to this other guy."

So, Weldon was taking me to town to take the car back to Lorin Monday morning, and he stopped someone and talked to him and he said, "Oh, that's the car that so-and-so's going to buy from Lorin Merrell."

And I thought, "Oh, well, I guess it won't be." It just happened that he knew that this guy was going to buy this car, and I thought, I had kind of fallen in love with it. It was a big, red Pontiac. And so, we went up and made out a check and he gave me \$600 off. I guess that was tax that comes when you pay so much a month, but he gave me \$600 off that car.

ES: You just paid him cash for it then?

Stella: Yeah, I paid. I have never charged a thing in my life, nothing.

ES: Well, that's good.

Stella, (looking at pictures again): I'd like to know the names of some of these kids. I know them. Have you ever seen a picture of someone that you knew you knew, but you can't tell who for sure?

ES: Now, Lorin, was he injured in the Army? I know he has a wooden leg. Is that the Lorin you are talking about?

Stella: He was riding a horse one time and the horse threw off and hurt his leg. Of course, he has had a new hip put in twice.

ES: It was an injury.

Stella: He hasn't a wooden leg. It's a new hip.

ES: Okay. I'll put these back in, then. I thought that you would enjoy seeing those.

Stella: I did, I really did. Did they finally find a picture of the tabernacle in the early days?

ES: Yes, I'll show them to you.

Stella: Well, I was just going to tell you. Lloyd and Bertha had a good picture of the tabernacle, if you didn't have one.

ES: I'll show it to you and we'll see if it is the same one.

Stella: Would you like a picture of the first mailman? I mean this, Dad with his mail buggy in front of the post office.

ES: Yes. I think that would be good. We have some of the mailmen, but I don't think that we have him. That would be great.

Stella: It's so you can take them off, huh? This is on a post card.

ES: Oh, what we ought to do is take it over and have the men take a picture of it, you know, the photographer, and then they can make it bigger. They can blow it up.

Stella: You could have that done right here, couldn't you, if it was taken off on the machine?

ES: Well, all we have is a copying machine, but it doesn't blow it up, it just prints it on paper; it's not as clear. Let's see now, I've got so many sections here. There's a real old one. Did they paint the brick on [the old tabernacle] at one time? Did it have white mortar between the brick? This looks older, like there, it's all one color. Do you see what I mean?

Stella: I don't know.

ES: You can see the mortar between the bricks more in this one. This is an old one.

Voice: Are you about through?

ES: Yes, we have really been talking.